



Town of Warren, Rhode Island

Minutes of the Economic Development Board

The Town of Warren, RI Economic Development Board met at a Regular Meeting on August 16, 2010 at 6:00 p.m. at Town Hall, located at 514 Main Street.

Council Members:

Cathie Tattrie
David Frerichs

Members:

Davison Bolster
Paula Silva
Karen Dionne
Sara Volino
Linda Brunini

Attendee:

Andy Asselin

Meeting was called to order at 6:05PM

- **Review of the first draft of the 2010-2011 EDB Work Plan**

At the start of the meeting, Linda Brunini stated she was not ready to present the draft work plan for this agenda item, and asked that it be moved off the agenda list. She stated that she would like to complete the draft and send it to the board for review prior to the next meeting. The board moved to the first agenda item, which was new business.

- **Board Member Resignation**

Chair, Sara Volino, announced that she and Vice Chair, Davison Bolster, received copies of an official Letter of Resignation from EDB member, Diane Horton. Councilor David Frerichs said he would forward the LOR to the town clerk so that an advertisement for a replacement for this position could be placed in the WTG, as soon as possible.

Cathie Tattrie questioned whether approval by the Town Council would be required in order for an ad to be placed. She will speak to Town Solicitor, Tony DeSisto, and pose the question: Does the Town Council need to approve the advertising in a meeting or can they go directly to an ad without a town council meeting?

Councilor Tattrie pointed out that the ads typically run in the WTG and on the town website.

- **Minutes from Prior Meetings**

Paula Silva made the motion to accept the minutes for the July 16th and the August 2nd meetings. Karen Dionne 2nd the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

- **Review of Valente letter**

Chair Volino pointed out that this letter was not directed to the EDB and suggested that the EDB ignore the letter. Discussion was brief about content. It was agreed that this be struck from the agenda.

- **Resolution changes for the EDB**

Discussion of the suggestion for a new application for members of board was had. Linda Brunini presented a new application for review. It was recommended that the question about representing an organization be removed. The suggestion was made and discussed regarding the interview process before the TC, that more information be given publicly so the town gets to see more of the process. Recommendation was made to remove the references section. Councilors Tattrie and Frerichs agreed there might be a better process in the public council interview.

Davison Bolster made a motion that we accept the changes recommended to the town's application for the EDB. It was seconded by Karen Dionne. All were in favor.

It was stated that the newly recommended EDB application will need to be put on the agenda for the next TC meeting. Linda Brunini will make the changes and give those to the Chair for addition to the TC agenda.

Discussion as to how many people should be included on the EDB ensued. The number, 11, was suggested by Councilor Tattrie, discussion was then had regarding 7-9. It was decided that the board increase it's membership by 2, bringing the board to 9 members. It was discussed and determined that a complete board cannot consist of more than 2 non-residents.

Davison Bolster made a motion to recommend that the EDB expand membership to 9 members, to include no more than 2 non-resident members that own businesses in town and that it be noted that the town council seeks members with diverse experience.

Recommendations for the EDG Resolution were made which included the elimination of the categories and elimination of the Enterprise Zone Director as an ex-officio member.

The motion was seconded by Brandt Heckert, which was followed by a unanimous vote of the board.

- **Discussion on RFP process**

The motion was made to draft a letter recommending to the town council that the town planner and the EDB be included in the creation and marketing of the sale or lease of town owned properties and to that the EDB be included in the review process of all applications to be sent to the Town Council. Davison motioned for the above, Brandt seconded. Unanimously voted by the board.

- **Small Business Loans:**

Sara Volino, Chair, and Cheryl Silva, Town Treasurer, met to review the proposal made by Councilor Alfano at the last TC meeting for the establishment of a town funded small business loan. The Treasurer's concerns, which were presented in the form of a document

to the EDB by Chair Volino, who said it is a complete business in and of itself. Councilor Frerichs stated that the town should not get involved with lending money. Brandt Heckert said if banks are not lending it's a catch 22. The small guys get lost between. There was concern expressed on the part of the board that lending money should be left to the professionals. Therefore, the board offers that as part of the 2010-2011 Work Plan, the EDB will include the research and development of a list of commercial lenders willing to offer small business loans and what their primary requirements are. Motioned by Karen Dionne, and seconded by Brandt Heckert. Unanimously voted on by the board. The EDB is offering to discuss this in detail within the outline of their work plan.

Sara Volino raised a question regarding the Food Bank in Bristol and whether it services Warren. It does, and people from Warren get to the food bank conveniently by bus. Davison Bolster motioned to adjourn, and Paula Silva seconded.

Submitted by Linda Brunini

